

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 AGRE-00 H-01 DEAE-00 CIAE-00
INR-10 IO-13 JUSE-00 NSAE-00 CTME-00 SNM-05
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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9441

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR, MX
SUBJECT: NARCOTICS - GOM CONCERNED ABOUT "IRRESPONSIBLE
STATEMENT" ON NARCOTICS PROGRAM CHANGES

REF: MEXICO 4061

1. FERNANDO BAEZA, EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE, TELEPHONED CHARGE EVENING OF APRIL 8 TO SAY THAT ATTORNEY GENERAL FLORES HAD INSTRUCTED HIM TO EXPRESS HIS CONCERN ABOUT A SYNDICATED ARTICLE WRITTEN BY BOB WIEDRICH OF THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE, WHICH APPEARED IN MARCH 16 MIAMI HERALD UNDER FOUR-COLUMN HEADING, "MEXICO IMPEDES ANTI-HEROIN DRIVE BY GROUNDING U.S. DRUG AGENTS."

2. ACCORDING TO BAEZA, FLORES IS PERSONALLY CONVINCED THAT SOURCE OF ARTICLE HAD TO BE A USG OFFICIAL SINCE ARTICLE IS REplete WITH DETAILS WHICH ONLY AN OFFICIAL WOULD KNOW. FLORES WAS TROUBLED THAT THIS MATTER SHOULD HAVE BEEN LEAKED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO QUESTION GOM AND HIS PERSONAL DEDICATION TO AN EFFECTIVE ERADICATION CAMPAIGN. BAEZA NOTED THAT THIS ARTICLE HAD APPEARED IN THE DAILY INTERNATIONAL OPINION SUMMARY PREPARED BY THE PRESIDENCY FOR THE PRESIDENT AND HIS CABINET. (WE SUBSEQUENTLY DETERMINED
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THAT WIEDRICH ARTICLE WAS LEAD ITEM IN PRESIDENCY SUMMARY FOR APRIL 5.) HE SAID THAT SUCH CONDUCT BY USG OFFICIALS WAS TOTALLY IRRESPONSIBLE, PLACED FLORES IN AN UNNECESSARILY DIFFICULT POSITION, AND THREATENED ALL ASPECTS OF US-GOM NARCOTICS COOPERATION.

3. CHARGE TOLD BAEZA THAT ARTICLE HAD COME TO HIS ATTEN-

TION ON MARCH 22 AND THAT IMMEDIATE REACTION HAD BEEN TO INSTRUCT EMBASSY OFFICERS TRAVELING TO WASHINGTON THAT DAY TO DISCUSS ARTICLE AND POSSIBLE RAMIFICATIONS WITH THE HIGHEST NARCOTICS CONTROL OFFICIALS POSSIBLE. CHARGE TOLD BAEZA THAT HE WAS SUBSEQUENTLY INFORMED THAT THE ARTICLE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITH PETER BOURNE AND MATHEA FALCO. CHARGE SAID WE COULD NOT BE SURE OF SOURCE OF ARTICLE. HOWEVER, WHATEVER ITS PROVENANCE ITS APPEARANCE WAS LAMENTABLE AND PREJUDICIAL TO OUR FINE CO-OPERATIVE EFFORT. HE ASKED THAT BAEZA CONVEY EMBASSY REGRETS TO FLORES AND ASSURE ATTORNEY GENERAL THAT ATTITUDES EXPRESSED IN ARTICLE ARE COMPLETELY AT VARIANCE, AS HE KNOWS, WITH REPEATED, HIGH-LEVEL USG EXPRESSIONS OF RESPECT AND APPRECIATION FOR SPLENDID GOM ERADICATION EFFORT. LUCEY

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